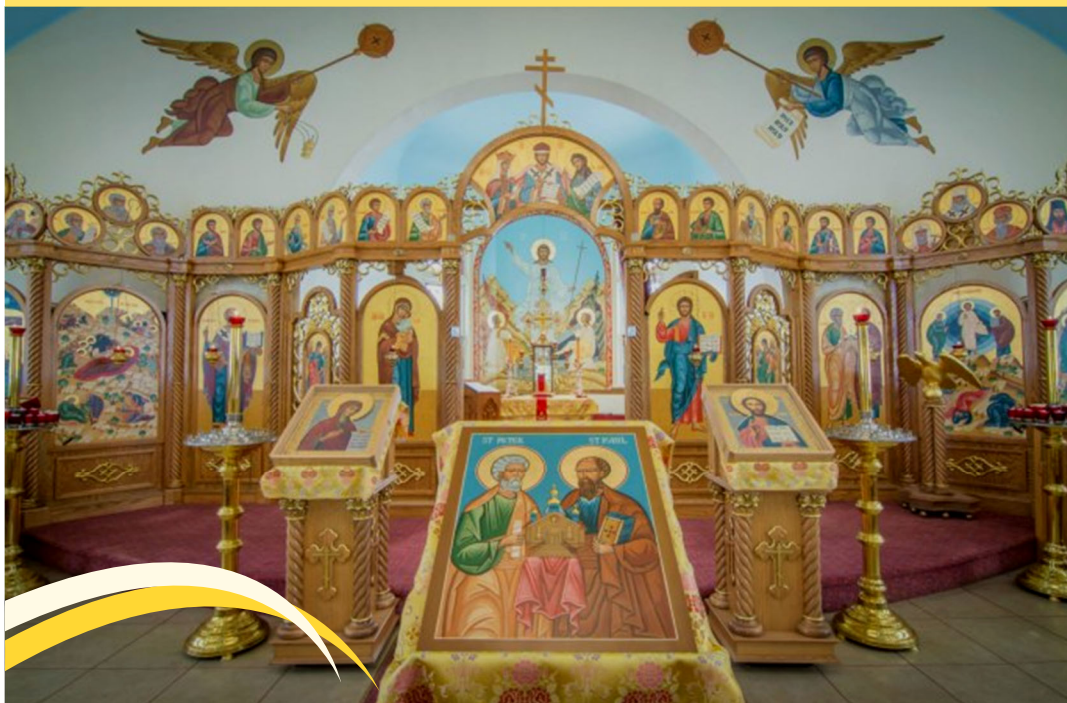


Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

July 16, 2023



6th Sunday After Pentecost

*Fathers of the First 6
Ecumenical Councils*

Divine Liturgy Readings

(Readings on Back)

- ◆ Romans 12:6-14
- ◆ Matthew 9:1-8

Announcements:

St Herman's Meal

Our next meal preparation for St. Herman's House will be on Tuesday, July 18th. We will start at 9:00am in the church hall. All are welcome to participate.

Newly Departed

Marianne Kormos, a former parishioner of our reposed in the Lord on Thursday, July 13. Visitation Sunday July 16, 2023 from 2-6 p.m. at St. Michael Orthodox Church 5025 East Mill Rd. Broadview Heights. Closing Parastas services Sunday at 6:00 p.m. Services at the Church on Monday July 17, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. May her memory be eternal!

Mark Your Calendars

Archbishop Daniel will be at our parish on Saturday, September 9 to celebrate Divine Liturgy and present Fr Basil Stoyka the mitre.

Festival Preparation Dates

Monday, July 24: 9:00am - Boil Cabbage, 12:30pm - Roll Cabbage

Wed, August 16: 9:00am - Boil Cabbage, 12:30 - Roll Cabbage

Thurs, August 17: Noon - Hall setup / Cabbage & Noodles / Beef Stroganoff

Friday, August 18: Tent / Bar Setup. Festival Begins (time TBA)

Sat, August 19: 2nd Day of Festival

Our festival is a lot of work, but also our largest fundraiser. Please plan on helping out as much as you can! Teamwork makes the dream work!

This Week

Tuesday, July 18

9:00am - St Herman's Meal

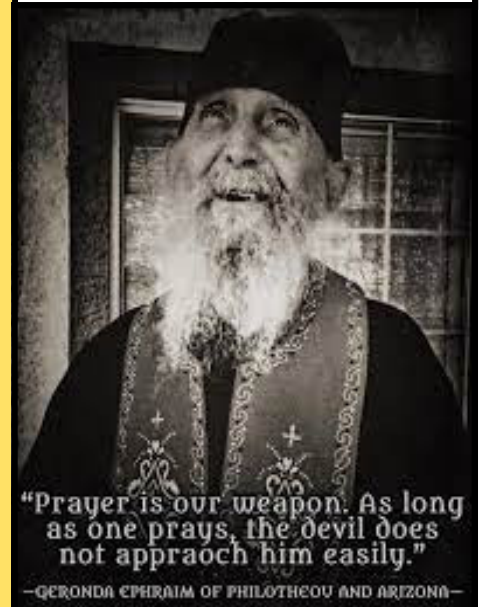
Saturday, July 22

6:00pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, July 23

9:00am - 3rd & 6th Hours

9:30am - Divine Liturgy



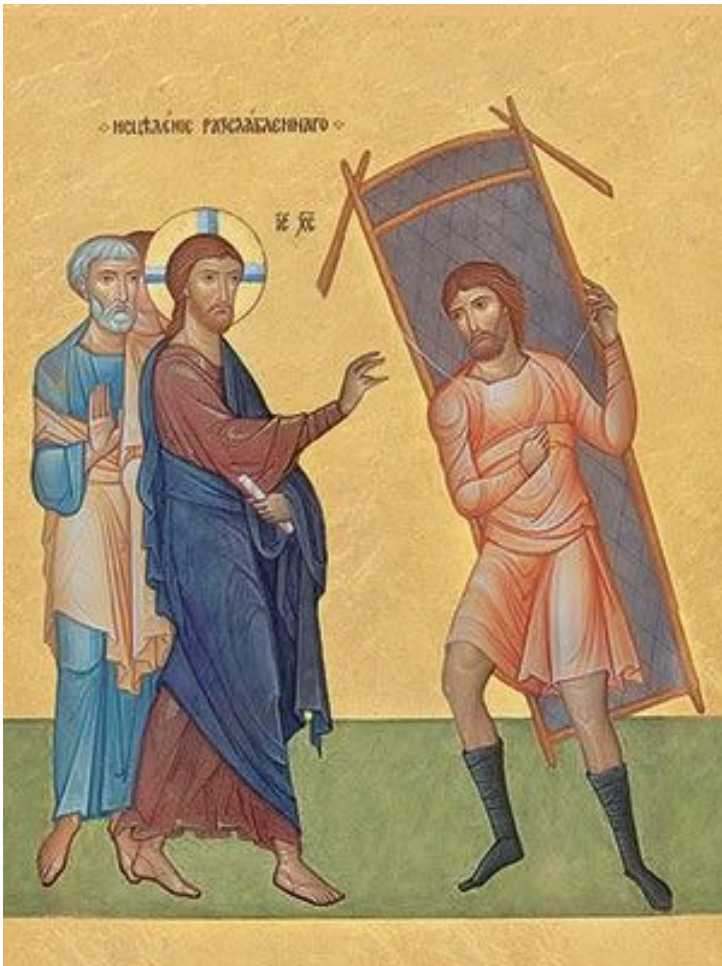
Meditation on Today's Gospel

There are surely many people who have little interest in the Christian faith because the Christians they know do not seem different from anyone else. That can easily be used as an excuse not to believe, but it is also perfectly understandable when people are not attracted to something that does not appear to make much of a positive difference. St. Paul made clear in today's epistle reading that we must energetically use the gifts given us by the Lord, which is another way of saying that we must be actively faithful, regardless of what our particular abilities may be. Those who follow his advice will not simply blend in with the larger culture of any age, but will instead become vivid icons of what God's salvation means for human beings.

Today's gospel reading gives us a clear portrait of what it means to encounter the Lord in this way. Christ did not rest content with forgiving the paralyzed man's sins. He also provided visible proof to the skeptics of His divine authority by enabling the man to stand up, carry his bed, and walk home. Christ's healing of the man's soul was not an invisible act somehow totally separate from the rest of his life. His miraculously renewed health was a visible sign of his restoration as a whole human being in God's image and likeness. The Lord restored his freedom, his strength, and his integrity as an embodied person. And He commanded him to live accordingly by doing what he could never have done by his own power: to rise, pick up his bed, and walk home.

Whether we recognize it or not, that is the will of the Lord for each and every one of us. He comes to heal our corruption, to strengthen us so that we will not be enslaved in weakness to our sins and passions, and to enable us to share fully in His restoration of the human person in the divine image and likeness as the New Adam. Even as the Savior rose bodily from the tomb and ascended to heaven, He enables us to serve Him faithfully in our own bodies in the practical challenges of the world as we know it. He did not rest content with forgiving the paralytic's sins, but empowered and commanded him to embrace a new life. He does the same for us, calling us to pursue a life of holiness, a life that displays to the world the healing of every dimension of our humanity.

When the paralytic was brought to Christ, He did not tell him immediately to stand up. First, He forgave his sins. That is a key point because our salvation is not found in simply doing good deeds or obeying laws by our own power. If that were the case, we would not need the God-Man to conquer sin and death on our behalf. Even as a



paralyzed person lacks the ability to rise up and walk, fallen humans lack the ability to free themselves from slavery to sin, to raise themselves from the grave, and to participate in the eternal life of God for which He made us in His image and likeness. Christ first forgave the man's sins, which means that He healed the corruption that reached to the depth of his soul and that kept Him from personal union with God. Our salvation is an infinite journey, for to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect is a calling with no upward limit. Christ told the paralytic to begin that journey by standing up, carrying his bed, and walking home. By forgiving his sins, Christ graciously gave him the healing necessary for him to take a first step that would have otherwise been impossible for him. Then the man had to cooperate with the Lord, obeying His command as he moved forward in life, one step at a time.

It was probably a struggle for a formerly paralyzed man, who had been used to lying still all his life, to start walking around. It will definitely be a struggle for us to make progress in pursuing a holy life, but that is what is necessary for us to participate in the fullness of Christ's healing. That is how, by God's grace, we may become vivid icons of the healing and salvation that the world so desperately needs.

Fathers of the First 6 Ecumenical Councils

In the Ninth Article of the Nicea-Constantinople Symbol of Faith proclaimed by the holy Fathers of the First and Second Ecumenical Councils, we confess our faith in "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." By virtue of the catholic nature of the Church, an Ecumenical Council is the Church's supreme authority, and possesses the competence to resolve major questions of church life. An Ecumenical Council is comprised of archpastors and pastors of the Church, and representatives of all the local Churches, from every land of the "oikumene" (i.e. from all the whole inhabited world).

The Orthodox Church acknowledges Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils:

The First Ecumenical Council (Nicea I) (May 29, and also on seventh Sunday after Pascha) was convened in the year 325 against the heresy of Arius, in the city of Nicea in Bithynia under Saint Constantine the Great, Equal of the Apostles.

The Second Ecumenical Council (Constantinople I) (May 22) was convened in the year 381 against the heresy of Macedonias, by the emperor Theodosius the Great.

The Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus) (September 9) was convened in the year 431 against the heresy of Nestorius, in the city of Ephesus by the emperor Theodosius the Younger.

The Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon) (July 16) was convened in the year 451, against the Monophysite heresy, in the city of Chalcedon under the emperor Marcian.

The Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople II) (July 25) "Concerning the Three Chapters," was convened in the year 553, under the emperor Justinian the Great.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III) (January 23) met during the years 680-681, to fight the Monothelite heresy, under the emperor Constantine Pogonatos.

The fact that the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicea II) is not commemorated today testifies to the antiquity of today's celebration. The Seventh Council, commemorated on the Sunday nearest to October 11, was convened at Nicea in the year 787 against the Iconoclast heresy, under the emperor Constantine and his mother Irene.

Prayers Appreciated for:

Living:

Mat. Priscilla, Priest Ian
Dn. Doug, Mat. Kathy
Dawn, Katherine,
Sam, Paula,
Marianne, Molly,
Suleiman, Steve

Departed:

Marianne

Tall Candles

Are given by Delaine Ward for
the health of the
Royhab & Jacob Families

And in memory of
**Bill, Halim, Elizabeth, Kai
& Sandy**

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday, July 17

Greatmartyr Marina
1 Corinthians 5:9-6:11
Matthew 13:54-58

Tuesday, July 18

Martyr Emilian
1 Cor. 6:20-7:12
Matthew 14:1-13

Wed, July 19

Relics of St Seraphim of Sarov
1 Cor. 7:12-24
Matthew 14:35-15:11

Thurs, July 20

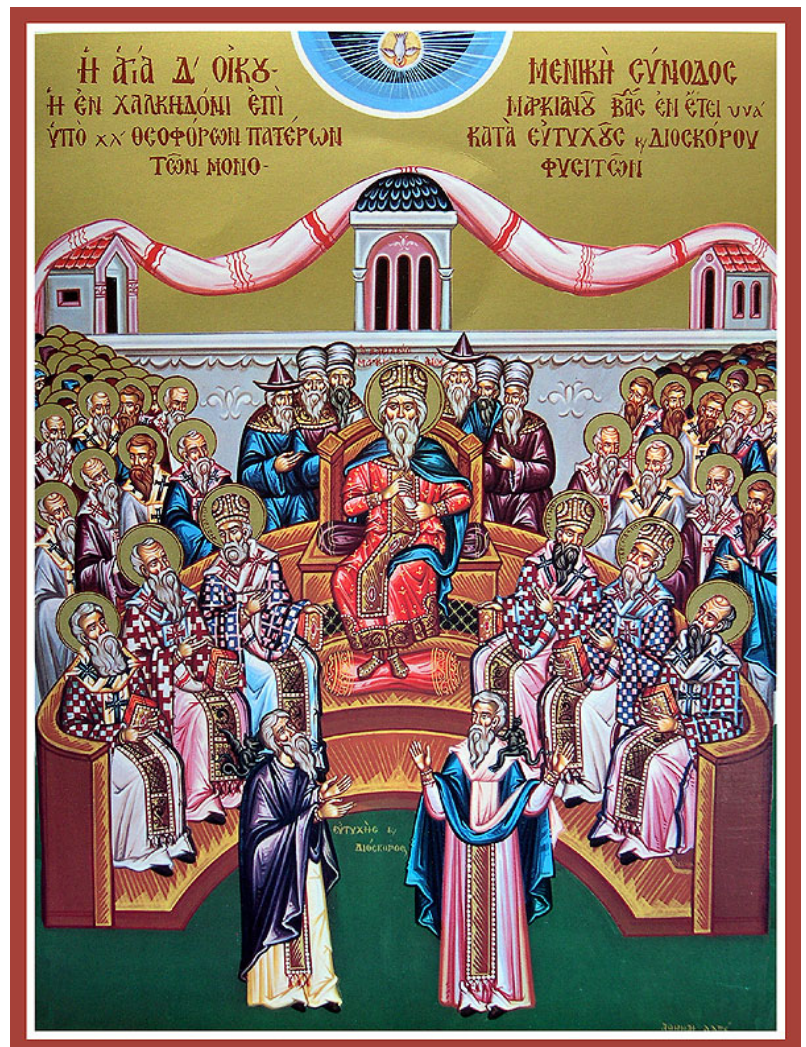
Prophet Elijah
1 Cor. 7:24-35
Matthew 15:12-21

Friday, July 21

Prophet Ezekiel
1 Cor. 7:35-8:7
Matthew 15:29-31

Saturday, July 22

*St. Mary Magdalene,
Equal to the Apostles*
Romans 12:1-3
Matthew 10:37-11:1



Today's Scripture Readings

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!

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